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Title: Need to ensure that farmers of Orissa get remunerative prices for their produce.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (SAMBALPUR): The problem of distress sale of paddy in many parts of Orissa, particularly in Hirakud Command Area of my constituency is still continuing in spite of the fact that many districts in the State are reeling under drought situation. Several times I have tried to bring this problem to the notice of the Central Government but without any result. The situation has gone so worse that last year a farmer committed suicide by consuming poison in front of the office of the District Collector at Bargarh. On the one hand, the farmers are not able to sell their products at the Minimum Support Price fixed by the Central Government and on the other hand, they are not getting their payment on time. This is a very peculiar situation which is prevailing since last three years and the backbone of the farmers has been broken. Very surprisingly, recently the State Government of Orissa has taken a decision to procure rice from the miller agents purchased by them at a much cheaper rate one year before, which would be adjusted against the current year's procurement target fixed by the State Government. I would request the Food Ministry to instruct the Food Corporation of India not to indulge itself in such type of activities at the cost of the poor farmers. I would also like to urge upon the Union Government to intervene in the matter and ensure that the farmers of Orissa are given proper price for their agricultural products.